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KERRIA JAPONICA PLANT NAMED 'FUBUKI NISHIKI'

5 CLASSIFICATION

The present invention relates to a new *Kerria japonica* (L.) DC [*Corchorus japonicus* Thunb.] plant.

VARIETY DENOMINATION

10 The new plant has the varietal denomination 'FUBUKI NISHIKI'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

15 The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of *Kerria japonica* (L.) DC [*Corchorus japonicus* Thunb.], which was discovered as a branch sport in a cultivated area of a controlled planting of *Kerria japonica* (unnamed, unpatented) in Kawaguchi City, Saitama Prefecture, Japan. The varietal denomination of the new variety is 'FUBUKI NISHIKI'.

20 The genus *Kerria* is included in the family Rosaceae, which comprises about 100 genera and 2,000 species of herbs, shrubs and trees native mostly to China and Japan. *Kerria* comprises one species, *Kerria japonica* (L.) DC, native to the temperate regions of eastern Asia, which possesses desirable ornamental
25 characteristics.

Kerria japonica is a deciduous shrub with green leaves and glabrous branches. Leaves of the typical species are alternate, oval, long acuminate, serrated on the margins with pinnate venation. It generally has yellow flowers.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The new variety was discovered as a branch sport in a controlled planting of *Kerria japonica* (unnamed, not patented) and differs from its parent by white flecked variegated foliage,
35 yellow flowers with lighter yellow and greyed-green variegation,

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and slightly larger leaf size. Asexual reproduction of the new
variety by vegetative cuttings, performed in Lewisberry,
5 Pennsylvania and Vacaville, California have confirmed that the
distinctive characteristics of the new variety are stable and
transmitted to succeeding generations, and the new variety
reproduces true to type.

10 COMPARISON WITH PARENTS

'FUBUKI NISHIKI' is distinguished from its parent and all
other varieties of *Kerria japonica* of which I am aware by its
white flecked variegated foliage, yellow flowers with lighter
yellow and greyed-green variegation and slightly larger leaf
15 size. The parent plant has completely green foliage and solid
yellow flowers.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS

5 The accompanying illustrations show a specimen of the new
cultivar in a photo illustration as true to color as is
reasonably possible to make in an illustration of this
character.

FIG. 1 illustrates the distinctive variegated foliage of
'FUBUKI NISHIKI'; and

10 FIG. 2 illustrates the flower of 'FUBUKI NISHIKI'.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

5 'FUBUKI NISHIKI' has not been observed under all possible
environmental, cultural and light conditions. The following
observations, descriptions and color readings are of 3-year-old
plants, in 5-gallon nursery containers, grown in Vacaville,
California and Lewisberry, Pennsylvania. In this description,
10 color references are to *The Royal Horticultural Society Colour
Chart* (1995) and terminology used in the color descriptions
herein refers to plate numbers in this color chart. Phenotypic
expression may vary with light intensity, cultural and
environmental conditions.

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CLASSIFICATION

Botanical: *Kerria japonica* (L.) DC.
[*Corchorus japonicus* Thunb.]

20 Parentage: Branch sport of *Kerria japonica*
(unnamed, not patented)

Propagation: Stem cuttings

PLANT

25 Size: About 2 m tall and about 3 m
across at 3 years of age; 1-
year-old plants measured about
30 cm tall and about 25 cm
across; and 2-year-old plants
measured 125 cm tall and about 2
30 m across

Habit: Upright; multi-branched shrub
when young, with an increasingly
spreading and pendulous habit in
its second and third years of
35 growth

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Branching

5 Lateral Branches: Numerous, obliquely upright
becoming pendant with age

Observed Number
Branches:

19

Size

10 Length: About 1 m long

Diameter: About 5 to 6 mm at base

Color: Near 139C

New Shoots: Near 139C

15 LEAF

Shape: Ovate to oblong; leaf tip long;
acuminate occasionally hooked;
leaf base mostly cuneate to
obtuse and occasionally cordate
or truncate

20 Size: About 5 to 10 cm long and 2.5 to
5 cm wide. (Parent plant has
typical leaf size of 3 to 7 cm
long and 2 to 3.5 cm wide.)

25 Arrangement: Alternate

Margin: Coarsely and irregularly doubly
serrate

Texture/Substance: Thin, chartaceous

30 Upper Surface: Glabrous with impressed veins,
nearly bullate

Under Side: Glabrous to slightly pubescent
with prominent veins

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VARIEGATION PATTERN

5 Flecked, splashed, and mottled in a random pattern. Areas
of variegation are frequently long and narrow, parallel to the
side veins of the leaf. There are additional smaller areas of
variegation that show no consistent shape and are randomly
distributed across the leaf. The variegation typically covers
25% to 50% of the leaf surface. Although the pattern of
10 variegation is random, every leaf displays noticeable patterns
of variegation. Foliage holds the initial variegation from
emergence through the growing season.

Young Foliage

15 Green Sections

Upper Side: Near 143A

Under Side: Near 143B

Variegated Sections

20 Upper Side: Between 196C and 196D, and near
155B

Under Side: Near 196D

Mature Foliage

Green Sections

25 Upper Side: Near 143A

Under Side: Near 143B

Variegated Sections

30 Upper Side: Between 196C and 196D, and near
155B

Under Side: Near 196D

Venation Pattern: Alternately pinnate depressed
above, raised beneath

Petiole

35 Size: Between about 0.5 to 1.5 cm

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Coloration: Near 143A

Texture: Smooth

5 Internodes: Between about 1 to 8 cm

Hardiness: USDA Zone 5 (20°F to -10°F)

Vigor: Rapid growth rate

10 Pests/Diseases: No pest or disease problems
noted

INFLORESCENCE

Bloom Period

Outdoors: March to May

15 Greenhouse: Not observed in greenhouse
conditions

Flower: Rotate

Arrangement: Solitary, terminal on lateral
branchlets

20 Size: About 3.5 cm wide

Shape of Inflorescence: Solitary, terminal on lateral
branchlets

Fragrance: None noted

25 Lastingness of
individual blooms: Between 3 to 5 days

Flower Petals

Typical Number: About 5

Observed Number: About 5

30 Shape: Ovate

Apex: Retuse occasionally apiculate

Base: Abruptly attenuate

35 Size: About 16 mm long; about 7 mm
wide

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Margin: Entire and smooth, often
undulate
5 Curvature: Slightly inwardly cupped
Arrangement: Rotate
Color
Background color: Near 5B
10 Variegated
section: Between 196C to 196D, with some
areas of light yellow near 11B;
along the margins and occasional
random speckling elsewhere on
the petal
15 Sepals
Shape: Pointed
Color
Background color: Near 194A
20 Variegation
color: Near 155B

REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

Androecium
25 Stamens: Between about 30-40
Anther
Shape: Club shaped
Color: Near 11B
Pollen amount: Voluminous
30 Color: Near 11B
Gynoecium
Pistil count: About 5
Length: About 2 mm
35 Stigma Color: Near 11B

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Style Color:

Near 11B

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Ovary Color:

Near 11B

Fruit Type:

Achene

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